

AMENDMENT NO. _____ Calendar No. _____

Purpose: In the nature of a substitute.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES—119th Cong., 2d Sess.

S. 4443

To increase cooperation with countries in the Eastern Mediterranean region in order to strengthen energy security and defense capabilities, and for other purposes.

Referred to the Committee on _____ and
ordered to be printed

Ordered to lie on the table and to be printed

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE intended
to be proposed by Mrs. SHAHEEN

Viz:

1 Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the fol-
2 lowing:

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Eastern Mediterranean
5 Gateway Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. PURPOSE.**

7 The purpose of this Act is to support the role of East-
8 ern Mediterranean countries as a strategic gateway in the
9 India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC).

10 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

11 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) The India-Middle East-Europe Economic
2 Corridor (IMEC), launched at the G20 Summit in
3 2023 with G7 backing, enhances connectivity be-
4 tween Asia, the Middle East, and Europe while serv-
5 ing as a strategic alternative to Chinese infrastruc-
6 ture investments.

7 (2) The Eastern Mediterranean region is of
8 strategic importance to the United States and its al-
9 lies, as demonstrated by the United States founding
10 role in the 3+1 framework with Greece, Israel, and
11 Cyprus.

12 (3) Energy projects such as the Great Sea
13 Interconnector, the Gregy Interconnection Project,
14 the Greece-Bulgaria Interconnector, and the LNG
15 terminals in the Eastern Mediterranean play a key
16 role in European energy security and provide critical
17 infrastructure that can serve as the backbone for
18 linking India, the Gulf, and Europe through the
19 Eastern Mediterranean and improve opportunities
20 for United States energy security.

21 (4) Cyprus, Greece, Egypt, and Israel are key
22 United States partners in promoting stability, secu-
23 rity, and economic development in the region.

1 (5) Enhanced defense and security cooperation,
2 as well as educational and cultural exchanges,
3 strengthen bilateral and multilateral ties.

4 (6) According to Presidential Determination
5 2025–03, “the furnishing of defense articles and de-
6 fense services to the Republic of Cyprus will
7 strengthen the security of the United States and
8 promote world peace”.

9 (7) The statement of policy in the Israel Rela-
10 tions Normalization Act of 2022 (22 U.S.C. 8601
11 note), notably that it is the policy of the United
12 States “to expand and strengthen the Abraham Ac-
13 cords to encourage other nations to normalize rela-
14 tions with Israel”, should guide the Secretary of
15 State and other United States actors in their work
16 to promote integration between India, the Middle
17 East and southeast Europe.

18 (8) India has strengthened strategic ties with
19 Greece, Israel, and Cyprus, fostering economic, mar-
20 itime, and security cooperation that aligns with
21 United States regional priorities.

22 (9) The success of the India-Middle East-Eu-
23 rope Economic Corridor depends on infrastructure,
24 security, and innovation partnerships rooted in the
25 Eastern Mediterranean region, which serves as the

1 primary connective hub linking the Gulf and Indian
2 subcontinent to Europe.

3 **SEC. 4. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

4 It is the sense of Congress that—

5 (1) the significance of diplomatic initiatives
6 such as the Greece-Cyprus-Israel-US “3+1” format,
7 the East Mediterranean Gas Forum and the Abra-
8 ham Accords should be recognized and the United
9 States should maintain its leadership role in these
10 diplomatic initiatives;

11 (2) the United States should continue to ac-
12 tively participate in the initiatives of the East Medi-
13 terranean Gas Forum;

14 (3) the Eastern Mediterranean region is a key
15 gateway that can link three continents and the
16 United States should support energy and transpor-
17 tation infrastructure, connectivity initiatives, defense
18 cooperation, and other forms of integration in and
19 around the region;

20 (4) the United States recognizes the unique role
21 of Eastern Mediterranean countries as both a dis-
22 tinct subregion and a central connector within the
23 broader IMEC corridor;

24 (5) the “3+1” diplomatic initiative should re-
25 sume with a meeting of the Secretary of State with

1 the Foreign Ministers of Israel, Greece, and Cyprus;
2 and

3 (6) the statement of policy in section 203 of the
4 Eastern Mediterranean Security and Energy Part-
5 nership Act of 2019 (22 U.S.C. 2373 note) should
6 guide the Secretary of State in promoting
7 connectivity between India, the Middle East and Eu-
8 rope, including participation in the trilateral dia-
9 logue on energy, maritime security, cybersecurity
10 and protection of critical infrastructure conducted
11 among Israel, Greece, and Cyprus.

12 **SEC. 5. DIPLOMACY IN EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN REGION.**

13 (a) STRATEGIC DIALOGUES.—The Secretary of State
14 may institutionalize multilateral strategic dialogues be-
15 tween the United States and IMEC countries, including
16 dedicated formats with Eastern Mediterranean countries,
17 with which the United States has a bilateral strategic dia-
18 logue.

19 (b) PRIORITIZATION OF THE EASTERN MEDITERRA-
20 NEAN.—The Secretary of State shall prioritize the East-
21 ern Mediterranean region in United States foreign policy,
22 focusing on energy security and defense cooperation with
23 countries in such region.

24 **SEC. 6. REPORTS AND STUDIES.**

25 (a) REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year
2 after the date of the enactment of this Act and an-
3 nually thereafter for 5 years and every 2 years
4 thereafter for 10 years, the Secretary of State shall
5 submit to the appropriate congressional committees
6 a report describing the implementation and effect of
7 this Act, including an update on energy projects and
8 defense cooperation that are being carried out pur-
9 suant to the authorities of this Act and the amend-
10 ments made by this Act.

11 (2) CONTENTS.—The report required by para-
12 graph (1) shall include an assessment detailing how
13 IMEC is helping to boost connections and trade be-
14 tween relevant United States partners with the aim
15 of countering the influence of the People’s Republic
16 of China.

17 (b) REPORT ON MULTILATERAL INITIATIVES.—Not
18 later than one year after the date of the enactment of this
19 Act, the Secretary of State shall provide to the appropriate
20 congressional committees a briefing on each multilateral
21 initiative between the United States and IMEC countries.

22 (c) ANALYSIS OF CYPRUS CENTRE FOR LAND, OPEN
23 SEAS, AND PORT SECURITY.—Not later than one year
24 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
25 of State shall analyze insights gained from the operation

1 of the Cyprus Centre for Land, Open Seas, and Port Secu-
2 rity as a potential model for broad-based multilateral co-
3 operation.

4 (d) STUDY OF PROGRAM CREATION AND EXPAN-
5 SION.—Not later than one year after the date of the enact-
6 ment of this Act, the Secretary of State, in consultation
7 with the Secretary of Energy, shall submit to the appro-
8 priate congressional committees a report describing the
9 cost of, steps to, and feasibility of—

10 (1) creating bilateral programs with Eastern
11 Mediterranean countries modeled on bilateral pro-
12 grams between the United States and Israel, includ-
13 ing—

14 (A) the Binational Agriculture Research
15 and Development Fund;

16 (B) the United States-Israel Binational In-
17 dustrial Research and Development Foundation
18 (including projects relating to homeland secu-
19 rity and cybersecurity);

20 (C) the United States-Israel Binational
21 Science Foundation; and

22 (D) the United States-Israel Science and
23 Technology Foundation; and

24 (2) expanding bilateral programs between the
25 United States and Israel, including the programs

1 listed in paragraph (1), to include other Eastern
2 Mediterranean countries and IMEC countries.

3 **SEC. 7. DEFINITIONS.**

4 In this Act:

5 (1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
6 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
7 mittees” means—

8 (A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of
9 the Senate; and

10 (B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of
11 the House of Representatives.

12 (2) EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRY.—The
13 term “Eastern Mediterranean country” refers to the
14 following countries:

15 (A) The Arab Republic of Egypt.

16 (B) The Hellenic Republic.

17 (C) The Republic of Cyprus.

18 (D) The State of Israel.

19 (3) IMEC COUNTRY.—The term “IMEC coun-
20 try” means any of the following countries:

21 (A) The European Union.

22 (B) The Federal Republic of Germany.

23 (C) The French Republic.

24 (D) The Italian Republic.

25 (E) The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

- 1 (F) The Republic of India.
- 2 (G) The United Arab Emirates.
- 3 (H) The United States.
- 4 (I) Any other country that the Secretary of
- 5 State designates as an IMEC country for pur-
- 6 poses of this Act.